



KANSAS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Major General Tod Bunting
Kansas Division of Emergency Management
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Dear General Bunting:

On August 10, 2005, the Board of Directors for the Kansas Emergency Management Association met in Hays, KS. During this meeting, the Board voted unanimously, to present the attached white paper proposing a beginning solution to the issue of regionalization. Although there are some details that still remain to be deliberated, we feel that this is a good beginning to issues that warrant our attention.

Ms. Guy, Mr. Duncan and members of the Board are at your disposal for further discussion.

Respectfully,

Don Button, President

Attachment

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Kansas Emergency Management Association
on August 10, 2005

Regionalization in Kansas Homeland Security Funding Issues

Kathleen A. Guy, KCEM, Butler County Emergency Management
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With great respect, the Kansas Emergency Management Association would like to make a concrete and achievable proposal by which we will be able to successfully implement the concept of regionalization. The background premises of the proposal are simple:

- We believe there is an existing mechanism to implement Regional Homeland Security Advisory Boards that will minimize the creation of any new bodies.
- We believe that regionalization will only be successful when driven and implemented from the local levels of government upward to the state government.

Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC) LEPCs are currently required in each designated planning district (county) in Kansas [42 USC 11001 (b) & (c) as implemented by K.S.A. 65-5722 (a), (f) & (g)]. It is an acknowledged fact that not all LEPCs are active in Kansas. In part, we would suggest this is because many planning districts do not have sufficient activity level to see the need to implement their LEPC. In many respects, this may be due to the limitations of the original duties of the LEPC, which were primarily limited to hazardous materials related issues.

However, the State of Kansas expanded the scope of the original State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) in Executive Reorganization Order No. 29 as subsequently embodied in K.S.A. 65-5721 et seq., into the current Commission on Emergency Planning and Response (CEPR). The net effect has been to expand the scope of the CEPR into "all hazards" issues. A number of local planning districts (counties) have performed a similar expansion of scope of their LEPC as well.

The composition of the membership of the LEPC is specified in federal law and Kansas Statute [Respectively, 42 USC 11001 (c) and K.S.A. 5722 (a) & (g)]. It must consist of "...elected State and local officials; law enforcement, civil defense, firefighting, first aid, health, local environmental, hospital and transportation personnel; broadcast and print media; community groups; and owners and operators of facilities subject to the requirements of this subchapter." (42 USC 11001 (c))

Therefore, the Kansas Emergency Management Association would like to forward the following proposal:

1. For the purposes Homeland Security funding handled by the designated State Applicant (SA) within Kansas (with the exception of MMRS funding), the LEPC should become the body at the county level to provide leadership in allocating the benefit of the funding.

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2. The composition of membership of the LEPC and CEPR should be expanded to include representation from the arena of agriculture (crop and/or livestock). This addition will provide the recognition that agriculture is not only the underpinning of our state's economy, but also represents an area that is documented to be at risk. This risk will not only affect our economy, but also that of the nation.
3. In accordance with a formula to be determined, a designated number of representatives from each local LEPC within a Kansas Homeland Security Region will be selected by their respective LEPC to serve on the Regional Kansas Homeland Security Advisory Board (KHSAB).
4. The KHSAB will meet on a regular basis (at least once, annually) to hear proposals on how Homeland Security Funding handled by the Kansas SA (with the exception of MMRS funding) should be distributed within each Kansas Homeland Security Region.
5. The KSHAB will be staffed and assisted in its role by the Kansas Homeland Security Regional Coordinator. This person may, in turn, call on additional resources from the local Emergency Management programs within the Region to assist in fulfilling the needs of the KHSAB.
6. In turn, the KSHAB may either recommend or approve (details to be negotiated with the State SA) Homeland Security Funding allocations to projects / jurisdictions with the Kansas Homeland Security Region.
7. The entire process will be unified from municipal government through state government by having the process monitored and approved by the Commission on Emergency Planning and Response (CEPR). This body has representatives of municipal, county and state government sitting as members, and is staffed by the Adjutant General.

BENEFITS

Ownership: The proposal places "ownership" of the integrated emergency management process and the distribution of Homeland Security priorities/funding in the hands of local authorities. It provides for a strengthening of local awareness of all hazards, the methodology for mitigating for, responding to and recovery from all disasters by applying local knowledge, shared concerns and the appropriate funding sources applicable to alleviate these issues.

Implementation: The proposal takes the burden of imposing a solution from the top down and instead allows local governments to assume their rightful and responsible role in implementing and making the solution actually work as intended. This helps to create an atmosphere of shared involvement and a commitment to success.

Strengthens the LEPC: The proposal strengthens the Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC) that are currently active, and provides the motivation of activation of LEPCs previously not active. It also enhances the mission of the Regional Homeland Security Coordinators who may have been tasked with supporting regions where the ratio of needs to resources may have become cumbersome.

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Beginning Steps: The proposal allows for the beginning steps of what is envisioned being a united, statewide platform that enhances our primary mission of public safety while working within the parameters of fiscal constraints, federal mandates and local needs.

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